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MAINTENANCE OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

Letter dated 11 September 1997 from the Permanent Representatives of Lithuania and Poland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the Final Statement by Mr. Algirdas Mykolas Brazauskas, President of the Republic of Lithuania, and Mr. Aleksander Kwasniewski, President of the Republic of Poland, issued at the conclusion of the Conference on Coexistence of Nations and Good-Neighbourly Relations - the Guarantee of Security and Stability in Europe, held at Vilnius on 5 and 6 September 1997.

We kindly request your assistance in distributing the text of the present letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly, under item 81 of the provisional agenda.

(Signed) Zbigniew Maria WLOSOWICZ
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
of the Republic of Poland
to the United Nations

(Signed) Oskaras JUSYS
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
of the Republic of Lithuania
to the United Nations

* A/52/150 and Corr.1.

ANNEX

Final Statement by the President of the Republic of Lithuania and the President of the Republic of Poland at the Conference on Coexistence of Nations and Good-Neighbourly Relations - the Guarantee of Security and Stability in Europe, issued at Vilnius on 6 September 1997

On 5 and 6 September 1997, the Presidents of Lithuania, Poland, Belarus, Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Latvia, Republic of Moldova, Romania and Ukraine and the Prime Minister of the Russian Federation participated in an international conference at Vilnius. They were joined by politicians, scientists and public and cultural figures from Germany, Iceland, Norway, the United States of America and other countries, the Chairman of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and representatives of the European Union.

The Presidents of the Republic of Lithuania and the Republic of Poland extended their sincere gratitude to all guests and participants of the 1997 Vilnius Conference.

The Presidents of Lithuania and Poland expressed their great appreciation for the support they received for the idea of holding the Conference from the Presidents of the Czech Republic, France, Germany, and the United States as well as other notable persons and politicians.

The Presidents noted with satisfaction that the principal aim of the 1997 Vilnius Conference had been attained: to communicate to Europe and the international community that good relations among neighbouring States contribute significantly to the building of a stable, secure and prosperous Europe.

The Presidents noted the need for All States to ensure compliance with the principles of democracy, the rule of law, the free market, freedom of expression and assembly, as well as respect for human rights and the rights of national minorities, which together constitute indispensable preconditions for overcoming the division of Europe and the development of good-neighbourly relations.

The Presidents reconfirmed the right of States to be free to choose their own security arrangements.

Summarizing the ideas and thoughts expressed at the Conference, the Presidents of Lithuania and Poland stated their conviction that all States shared an interest in implementing and fostering universally recognized principles of international law, including those enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the main documents of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe.

The Presidents emphasized that the end of the cold war had offered an opportunity and a historic responsibility to the States represented at the Conference to develop relations in Central and Eastern Europe. Those States are united in the conviction that dialogue, cooperation, the elimination of

superstitions and stereotypes, respect for the principles of democracy, human rights, the rights of national minorities and the sovereignty of States strengthen security in the region and in all of Europe.

The Presidents stated their conviction that the process of enlargement of the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, to which both Lithuania and Poland aspire, would expand the zone of security in Europe and, as a result, would contribute significantly to the building of a free, peaceful, secure and prosperous Europe.

Lithuania and Poland's current bilateral relations, a true strategic partnership, can be defined as historically their best. This is evidence that on the basis of the above principles, countries can overcome misunderstandings and historical disagreements and that national minorities can be a factor in bringing together and uniting neighbouring States.

The Presidents of Lithuania and Poland proposed to the participants of the Conference and to all other States that they continue the dialogue which started at Vilnius. The next meeting may take place in Poland in 1999.